

זכור את יום השבת לקדשו.
ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל-מלאכתך,
ויום השביעי שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT VAYAKHEL-PIKUDEI

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בס"ד



TIME FOR REFLECTION

ELISHEVA HERSH
SHEVET AVICHAI

This week is Shabbat Hachodesh, which means that in addition to the usual Torah portion, we also read Parashat Hachodesh, which instructs us with the first mitzvah given to the Jewish people as a nation - to set up the Jewish calendar and sanctify the new moon. Every year, Shabbat Hachodesh falls on the Shabbat closest to Rosh Chodesh Nissan, begging the question: why do we always read this particular section of the Torah on the Shabbat leading up to Pesach?

A simple explanation is taken from the Mishna Megillah, which tell us that this parasha includes the laws of the Korban Pesach, along with other laws to do with the festival; therefore it is fitting to read about this in the weeks leading up to it. However, the Ramban presents a different reason, writing that the Torah is instructing us to begin counting the year from this exact point in time - the beginning of the Exodus from Egypt - and every month will then be viewed in comparison to this. For example, the second month will be viewed as the second month after the Exodus and so on. This will allow us to continually be reminded of the struggles we faced in Yetziat Mitzrayim but ultimately remember the day the Israelites went from being slaves to become a free Jewish nation. We remember the day that we went from having no control over our lives to a nation that regained their freedom. This additionally explains why the mitzvah of Rosh Chodesh is the

most fitting to learn about before entering the month of Nissan as it symbolises the process of rebirth and renewal mirroring the rebirth of the Jewish people into a free nation.

The Zohar explains that God chose the moon to be the measurement of time for the Jewish people as "the people of Israel emulate the moon". Like the moon, we dip and soar through history, we have our regressions and defeats but each one preludes to another rebirth, another renewal. The story of the moon is the story of a nation. There are times in history where we have been persecuted and not had the freedom to live our lives or practice our religion, but something we should be taking with us every time we celebrate Rosh Chodesh, is that we do have this freedom now. We do have the ability to pray to God, to celebrate the chagim freely, to work on bettering ourselves without threat of persecution.

Every month we should look at the full moon and celebrate not only Rosh Chodesh, but the fact that we have lived another month and have been given another opportunity to restart and recharge ready for the next. Every month when we see a full moon in the sky, we need to take this as our moment to focus on what is really important and ensure we renew ourselves to be the best we can be. Rabbi Sacks famously said "there are all sorts of inequalities in the world, but there's one thing we all have equally, and that's time itself" - let us take this quote with us into the month of Nissan and make sure we use our privilege of freedom to the best of our abilities.

**ELISHEVA WAS A RAKEZET ON WINTER
MACHANE 5780.**

London In: 17:59 Out: 19:06
Manchester In: 18:05 Out: 19:18
Cambridge In: 17:55 Out: 19:06

Oxford In: 18:00 Out: 19:11
Bristol In: 18:06 Out: 19:16
Birmingham In: 18:03 Out: 19:15

Leeds In: 18:02 Out: 19:15
Liverpool In: 18:08 Out: 19:21
Jerusalem In: 18:20 Out: 19:33

Q&A WITH RAV JOEL RAV JOEL KENIGSBURG | RAV SHALIACH



Q: Should we be adding in anything in particular to our tefila during the current times?

A: As you will be aware, we are facing unprecedented circumstances whereby our shuls have closed and

we are unable to daven together with a minyan. However, it is important to remember that while various components of our tefilla now cannot be said (Kaddish, Kedusha, Barchu and any devarim shebiKedusha) the single most important element of tefilla has not been taken away from us, and that is our kavana – the intention of the heart. The primary essence of tefilla is an encounter between man and Hashem and what matters even more than the words that we say are the emotions of our heart. In the words of our Sages אחד המרבה ואחד הממעיט ובלבד שיכוון – “את לבו לשמיים” – “one may say more and one may say less, but the most important is that they should turn their hearts to Heaven” (Mishna Menachot 13:11).

Having said that, it would certainly be appropriate to add in tefillot based on our current situation. We are living through a pandemic of Biblical proportions. Many people around the world have taken ill, died or are suffering in countless other ways and it would be callous of us not to take not their plight seriously. The Rambam writes in Hilchot Ta’aniot that any type of distress which befalls the community behoves us all to examine our ways, do teshuva and cry out to Hashem in tefilla. He writes that one who does not do so acts with a measure of cruelty.

Therefore, the first step to take would be to make sure we are cognizant of the situation when we daven. Particularly as we are davening alone and do not have the power of communal prayer, we should all be increasing our kavana to make our tefilla that much more effective and meaningful. It would certainly be appropriate to add in the names of anyone one knows is ill in the bracha of “Refaeinu”.

Beyond that, there are a number of additional prayers we can say. Following are a number of suggestions for people to consider:

- In the bracha of “Shma Koleinu” one may add

any personal tefilla one wishes. A number of prominent rabbanim in Israel have suggested inserting the following words, based on our Yamim Noraim liturgy with a slight amendment: אבינו מלכנו, זכור רחמיך וכבוש כעסך, וכלה דבר, וחרב, ורעב, ושבי, ומשחית, ועון, ומגיפה, ופגע רע, וכל מחלה, וכל תקלה, וכל קטטה, וכל מיני פורענויות, וכל גזירה רעה, ושנאת חינוס, מעלינו, מעל כל בני ברייתך, וכל העולם.

“Our Father, our King, remember Your compassion and overcome Your anger, and remove pestilence, sword, famine, captivity and destruction, iniquity and plague, and bad mishap and all illness, and any harm, and any feud, and all kinds of afflictions, and all harsh decrees and baseless hatred, from us and from all the people of Your covenant, and from the entire world.”

The prayer can be said in any language one understands.

- After the Shemonah Esrei one could say Avinu Malkeinu.

- Extra Tehillim can be said. Perakim 20, 121, 130 and 142 are some of those commonly recited in times of trouble, but you can say any you wish.

- There is a prayer that can be recited by one who needs to eat on Yom Kippur due to health reasons. It expresses the fact that in those circumstances eating rather than fasting is actually a mitzvah, and a fulfillment of the Torah’s command to protect our lives. As we pray alone rather than with a minyan, in order to protect our lives and those around us, I would suggest reciting a similar tefillah along these lines:

הנני מוכן ומזומן לקיים מצוות “ונשמרתם מאוד לנפשותיכם” ולהתפלל ביחידות, כמו שכתבת בתורתך: ושמרתם את חוקותי ואת משפטי אשר יעשה אותם האדם וחי בהם, אני ה’. ובזכות קיום מצווה זו תרפא את כל חולי עמך ישראל לרפואה שלמה ונזכה שתמנע מגפה מנחלתך ומכל העולם כולו, כן יהי רצון, אמן

May Hashem answer all our prayers for a *Refua Shleima* for us, the Jewish people and all of humanity.

IF YOU HAVE ANY HALACHIC QUESTIONS PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT RAV JOEL AT RAV@BAUK.ORG. FOLLOW RAV JOEL ON FACEBOOK (RAV SHALIACH PAGE) AND ON TWITTER @JOEL KENIGSBURG.



ASHIRA LASHEM

GALIA COHEN | SHEVET TZION

גַּם כִּי־אֶלֶךְ בְּגִיאַת צְלָמוֹת לֹא־אִירָא רָע כִּי־אִתָּה עִמָּדִי

“Though I walk through a valley of deepest darkness, I fear no harm, for You are with me.”

(Tehillim 23:4)

We live in a world where everything is changing rapidly and fear is inevitable. We all fear different things but I think that today more than ever before we fear being alone. We all have some kind of social anxiety due to different forms of social media.

We live in a world where technology is ruling us and dictating how we need to be. We are always connected to millions of people and more information than we will ever need, and still we are disconnected. We count our followers and likes as though we are surrounded by so many people even though we are alone. We all walk around with our phones glued to our hands and feel anxious without them. We post on social media and wait for the likes and comments to come in, we get caught up in different thoughts if someone isn't commenting, are they still my friend?

We go to social gatherings and document it all because if we don't will anyone think it happened? We tag each other to show everyone how social we are and how we have the best social circle but when in social gatherings we are just on our phones. We are all surrounded by each other but when was the last time had a deep and honest conversation with your friend. We are all social creatures but when was the last time you actually felt like you were really being social not on social media. Although we are connected more than ever before, we feel disconnected and fear being alone.

At these time of fear and when we are not sure of our social situation we need to remember our role in the world. We are all part of a plan that God has created and therefore we are not alone. Even in uncertain times we should learn to have the courage and see the bigger picture to find the hidden messages that God has put in front of us.

This *mizmor* of Tehillim reminds us that even when we are faced with fear and challenging times we should have no fear because God is always with us, sometimes it just takes looking up to realize it.

We sing this song during a tisch which is a great time to connect to the people around us with no filters, and strengthen our *emunah* (belief) in Hashem.

**GALIA WAS A
MADRICHA ON
MA'APILIM MACHANE
5780.**



'Fearless' - Ivan Reber

22nd Adar 5780/18th March 2020

Dear Chaverim,

We find ourselves in a difficult situation. For over 80 years our existence has been dependant on regular social interaction. From the first circle at Sviva to learning in the Bet Midrash, from sharing tents on Machanot to exploring the land of Israel together.

Now we find ourselves restricted and limited. Hachshara has been sent back to the UK for the first time ever, our Svirot have closed and uncertainty hangs over upcoming events. It is very likely that Yom Ha'Atzmaut will look somewhat different to previous years. Shabbatonim and other events are being postponed until social gatherings can be considered safe.

We have become "עַם לְבָדֵד יֹשֵׁב" - *a nation dwelling alone*". These words come from the same episode in which the Bnei Yisrael are praised for the privacy they accord each other despite living so closely together. But respect and privacy must not turn into heartlessness, overlooking and ignoring each other. While we may be *dwelling alone* we are still *a nation* and must continue to act as such, reaching out, caring and supporting.

To that end, Bnei Akiva UK is preparing a host of materials for the coming weeks and months. We are proudly a Chinuch Movement, and nothing will stop us sharing our thoughts, ideas and inspirations on everything from Israel engagement to advice for learning and davening, shiurim and chaburot. There will be hadracha materials for madrichim, ideas for use on Shabbat for families with younger children, and Halachik guidance from our Rav Shaliach.

We will also be reaching out to our Chaverim who find themselves in isolation as well as supporting communal measures to help those at risk and those working in the health industry. If you can spare the time to support our efforts, or if you would like to contribute towards them please be in touch!

Above all we are here for you, our Chaverim, to help you with whatever you might need in the weeks ahead. Please do not hesitate to reach out (numbers, email addresses and social media handles are all below) - especially if you or anyone you know is in isolation - and we will do what we can to help.

With tefilot for a speedy recovery for all those who are unwell, and for a return to a calmer world.

B'virkat Chaverim !Torah vAvodah

Rafi Cohen
Mazkir

Mazkir Rafi Cohen | **Chinuch** Chana Be'eri | **Israel** Eli Maman | **Svirot** Zoe Daniels
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www.bauk.org | @bneiakovauk |    

- **Student Bet Midrash** continues TONIGHT Thursday 19th March!!! We encourage everyone to continue with their regular chavrutot/chaburot over video chat, and invite you to join us at **7.45pm** for a virtual Ma'ariv followed by a shiur given by **Rabbi Michael Laitner**. Email Chana at **chinuch@bauk.org** for more details or if you have any questions. Zoom links will be posted on the Student Bet

Midrash Facebook page at 7.40pm.

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiakovauk)** to get regular updates with what is going on in the Tnuva. We will be posting regular Chinuch output and updates over the coming weeks and months and invite you all to get involved!